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# LETTER

FROM A

## DISSENTER

To the AUTHOR of

*The CRAFTSMAN.*

Occasioned by his Paper of the  
27th of *October* last.

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— *Sic notus Ulysses?*

VIRGIL.

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L O N D O N:

Printed for J. PEELE at *Locke's Head* in  
*Amen-Corner*, 1733.

[ Price Sixpence. ]

A

LETTER

FROM A

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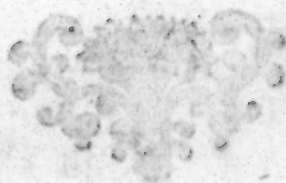
To the Author of

THE CRATISM

Ordered by the  
Council of the

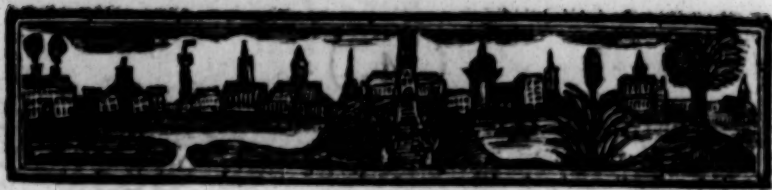


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L O N D O N

Printed for J. P. at Esda's Head in  
New-Corner, 1733.  
[Price Sixpence.]



A  
LETTER  
FROM A  
DISSENTER

To the AUTHOR of  
*The CRAFTSMAN, &c.*

S I R,



AT the late anniversary Feast in the City, I happened to be seated next to a Gentleman, who is one of your most profound Admirers. In all such crowded Assemblies it is very usual, and almost unavoidable, for the Company to break into separate Clubs of Discourse, and to raise a Topic of Conversation communicable to the Audience of only half a Dozen Neighbours. It was my Fortune to be elbowed into a Committee of this Nature, which was entirely composed of very keen and zealous Politicians. Your Friend, after a great many severe Strokes at the *Ministry*,  
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and Censures on the Measures lately pursued by the *Ministry*, fastened, at last, on a Proposition, which appeared to me pretty novel and extraordinary. He boldly asserted, and insisted on it with much Vehemence, that the *Whigs* and *Tories* had entirely changed Sides; that the *Whigs* were become rampant *Tories*, and the *Tories* staunch and intrepid *Whigs*; and, in a Word, that *Whig* and *Tory* did not now actually exist on the same Footing as formerly, but were become a *new Division* of the Nation into a *Court* and a *Country Party*. He seemed indeed a little embarrassed with this Part of the Argument, having but a Moment before, somewhat unwarily advanced, that the WHOLE BODY OF THE PEOPLE were united into *one Party*, and that *Party* wholly made up of such as were dissatisfied with the present *Administration* of publick Affairs. Nothing of this kind however was capable of hindering him to persist in the Notion he had advanced; to confirm which, he brought out your Paper of the 27th of *October*, as a most unquestionable Authority. Finding I had not read the Paper, he was pleased to recommend it to me as a most incomparable Performance; assuring me, that in it you had most unmercifully mauled the *Court Whigs*, for ever demolished the *Ministry*, and, which was yet stranger than all the rest, made a most firm and indissoluble Union betwixt the *Tories*, and the *Protestant Dissenters*.

So high a Character of any Performance could not but excite my Curiosity to peruse it; and this Curiosity was not a little heightened by my Concern in it as a *Dissenter*. I was bred  
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in that Persuasion ; and, upon a most anxious and impartial Inquiry, I have since been persuaded, that it was my Duty to continue in it. Bigotry to any Sect I have none ; but the Principles of the *Dissenters*, rightly explained, and rightly understood, seem to me remoter from Bigotry than those of any other Set of Men amongst us ; and for that Reason alone I remain a *Dissenter* : Far from thinking ill of the *Church of England*, or its Members, many of whom I know to be as little Bigots as myself ; I yet think my own Way the best, and condemn no Man for thinking his Way better. Liberty to enjoy my own Sentiments, and to serve God my own Way is all I seek, as to Religion, from any Man, and which I heartily wish were given to all Men. And as my Benevolence is confined to no Party, it is my constant Prayer that all Parties may honestly and truly unite in the Principles of *Liberty* and *Charity*.

To a Person of this Temper you will readily judge, that any rational Proposal of an Union betwixt Parties could not but be extremely acceptable. This is required at the Hands of every honest Man by our *Dear Country*, which so long hath been distracted and torn to Pieces by our wicked and unnatural Divisions. But with whom are we to unite, and upon what Terms ? The *Dissenters*, according to your Scheme, are to unite with the *Tories*, and join with them in their Opposition to the *Whig* or *Court Party* : That is to say, a Party of Men constantly professing, and truly attached to the Principles of *Liberty*, both in  
Church

Church and State, are to desert their *old Friends* and *Fellow-Sufferers* in the same Cause, and join themselves to a *Party*, who, for very near a *Century* past, have been the avowed Foes to all *Liberty*, both *Civil* and *Religious*; and this for no other Reason, but because the *Tories* happen to be at present in *Opposition* to the *Court*, and are giving us some very *faint* and *dubious* Insinuations of *disowning* their former Principles of *Government*, and of *acknowledging* their *Error* in Matters of *Religion*.

This, *Sir*, is the whole Substance of your Paper, in *two Words*; and the Hinge upon which your whole Argument turns. You talk, indeed, a great deal about *Whigs* turning *Tories*, and *Tories* turning *Whigs*; but it is all *gratis Dictum*, and a mere begging the Question. All the Instances you give are either general, or nothing to the Purpose. And I think it impossible for a true and genuine *Tory* to renounce at once the Prejudices of his *Education*, and that natural Propensity, which the *Tories* have for Power, and to make the most of it, when Power is put into their Hands. In Conversions of this Kind, I am always apt to use a little Diffidence, and to have an old *Adage* constantly ringing in my Ears, *Naturam expellas furca licet*.

*Opposition* to a *Court* is no certain *Characteristick* either of *Whig* or *Tory*. Neither is it any Proof that a Man is truly in the Interest of his *Country*, unless it be known, both that the *Measures* he opposes are *wrong*, and the *Motives* upon which he opposes them are *right*. A *Whig*,  
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upon *Whig* Principles, is obliged to support a Government that is established upon those Principles; and a *Tory*, consistently enough with *Tory* Principles, may endeavour to subvert a Government he does not like. It is not the bare Opposition to a *Court*, but the Nature and Tendency of the *Opposition*, which is sufficient to denominate a Man a *Whig* or a *Tory*; and consequently, our Notions of *Parties* are not necessarily to be changed, when we see *Whigs* supporting, and *Tories* distressing any Government, or Administration.

As little will it avail to prove an *Opposition* to a *Ministry* just, or the *Opponents* to be *Whigs*, to say, that they justify their *Opposition* by Arguments drawn from *Whig* Principles. I cannot well conceive, how any *Court* Party can be opposed, with a good Grace, but upon *Whig* Principles, or, at least, *Whig* Pretences. To argue against the *Court* upon the Principles of a *Tory*, even as you, Mr. *D'Anvers*, have enumerated them, would, I fancy, at this Time of Day, be both unsafe and unpopular. No Thanks to you therefore for adopting *Whig* Maxims, and *Whig* Principles, to prop up a sinking Cause, which is not able to support it self by its own.

Vain, Sir, is your Attempt, and to the last Degree ridiculous, to separate the *Dissenters* from their old *Friends*, and to unite them with their ancient *Enemies*, under the weak Pretence of the former having *betrayed* their Principles, as to Civil Liberty, and of the latter having *forsaken* theirs. I use the Word *forsaken*, tho' it is not your own Word, because if you do not mean it, you either have no Meaning at all, or a very ill one, that is, an Intention to deceive.

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The Word used by you is a very soft one, *disowning* ; but the whole Chain of your Reasoning depends upon a Supposition of something much more strong and explicite. You ought therefore to have spoke out plainly and positively, unless you had a Mind to save your Party from coming under Engagements, which, you are conscious, they are in no Disposition to perform. However, taking it either Way, the Argument is quite too general, to induce either a *Dissenter*, or any other honest Man, to abandon the Interest of the present *Administration*, and to join in those Measures of *Opposition* to it, which you so strenuously endeavour to inculcate.

It does not appear to me, nor will it, I believe, appear to any impartial Inquirer, that the Gentlemen in the *Opposition* have taken any Steps, or made any Attempts in pursuance of it, which are inconsistent with the very Rigour of *Torism* and *Jacobitism*. To weaken the Government, to debase the Prerogative, and to clog the Wheels of the Administration, are all Strains of Policy, which may be made subservient even to *Popery*, and the *Pretender*. To cry down *Arbitrary Power*, and to cry up the *Original* and *Fundamental Rights* of the *People*, are Feats that have been performed more than once by Men, who had a Mind to set up *Arbitrary Power*, and to destroy the *Original* and *fundamental Rights* of the *People*. *Jacobites*, professed *Jacobites*, have already all done this, and will always be ready to do it again, whenever they shall find a proper Season to distress a Government founded on the Principles of Liberty. Every extraordinary Act of Legislation, however exerted in a due Consistence with the Constitution

stitution, and absolutely necessary for the Preservation of the whole, will, in such Cases, be exclaimed against as Encroachments on Liberty, even by Men, who hate the very Name of Liberty, and who, if they did govern, would govern by no other Rules, but *Arrêts of State*, and *Regal Proclamations*.

In all Oppositions to a Government, whatever be the Motives, it is absolutely necessary to set out with the most specious and plausible Pretences, in order to gain both Credit and Strength to the Party opposing. No Pretence can be more specious than that of *Liberty*, because no Cause is either more justifiable in itself, or more chearfully espoused by the Common People. For this Reason we shall meet with few Instances in History of any Conspiracies against a Government, or Constitution, where the Conspirators have not had Liberty and the Publick Good in their Mouths. Our own History, in former Ages, is full of very apposite Examples to this Purpose. Nor hath it been wanting to refresh our Memories with Instances of a much later Date: For no longer ago than the Reign of our renowned Deliverer King WILLIAM, the *Tories* were remarkable for pursuing this very Method; and were always bellowing for Liberty against a *Prince*, to whom they owed even the Liberty of bellowing. In Queen *Anne's* Reign, as long as that glorious Princess continued the Fautress of Liberty, and Protectress of *Europe*, was not the Outcry amongst the *Tories* raised as loud as it is now against *ministerial Tyranny*, and *ministerial Corruption*? Did they not even appeal to the *Collective Body* of the People, in *Opposition* to the

*Representative Body* ; however contrary such a Practice be to their own declared *Principles* and *Maxims*, when Power hath been in the Hands of Persons, in whom they confided ? Did they not raise a *Sedition* for the Sake of *Passive Obedience*, and fly out into an open *Rebellion* in favour of a Criminal under Prosecution for preaching the Doctrine of *Non-Resistance* ; a Doctrine at once so destructive to the Liberties of *Britain*, and to the Liberties of Men ? And in the Four last Years of that Reign, when Men of their own Stamp and Kidney came again into Play, were not all the Doctrines of *Slavery* again revived, and the Power of the *Crown*, and the Power of the *Ministry* too raised to a most formidable Heighth, even by those very Men, who had so loudly exclaimed against the Abuse of Power under the just and legal, as well as the wise and successful Administration of the Great Earl of GODOLPHIN, and the ever-memorable Duke of *Marlborough* ? So little Stress is there to be laid upon the Professions, or the strongest Protestations of *Tories*, when they think fit to put on the Mask of *Whiggism*, and to cover their Disaffection to a *legal Government*, and a *free Constitution*, under the specious Garb and Pre-text of Love to *Liberty*, and Love to their *Country*.

Pray, Mr. *D'Anvers*, do you believe, or does any Man in his Senses believe, that the *Opposition* of the *Tories* to our late mild and gracious Monarch King GEORGE the *First*, was owing to *Whig Principles*, or the Love of *Liberty* ; though they were made the Pretences at that Time, as well as they are at this Time ? Did not these Pretences to *Liberty*, and the publick Good,



Good, terminate in a *Rebellion* against the *whole Constitution*; the Result of a most desperate and unnatural *Conspiracy* to bring in *Arbitrary Power*, and a *Popish Pretender*? Did not the *Pretender* himself, in several of his Declarations, give himself *canting Airs*, and talk most floridly, and in the Style of a *Demagogue*, about the *Liberties* of *Britain*, and the *Rights* of the *People*? Was the *Pretender* therefore a *Whig*? Or are we to look upon his known Friends and Abettors to be *Whigs*, and seriously embarked in the Cause of *Liberty*? No, Sir, the Fallacy is too gross to impose upon any, who are not already resolved to be imposed upon. *Catiline* himself pretended to be a most zealous and staunch *Republican*, at the very Time that he was contriving to make himself the *Tyrant* of his *Country*. He too made his Complaints of *Corruption* and *Factions* in the State, and was a mighty Champion for *Freedom*, and a *Coalition* of *Parties*; but the *Freedom* he meant, was a *Freedom* for himself, and his profligate Associates to oppress their Fellow-Citizens; and the sole *Union* he had in View was an *Union* of *Slaves*, subjected to his own lawless and ungovernable Will. The *Romans* were, at that Time, too wise to hearken to his Pretences. They remained deaf, and their Deafness contributed to the lengthening out their Day of *Liberty*. *Rome* was preserved, and *Catiline* had his *Reward*.

*Opposition* therefore to the Government, is no more a Proof now, than it was formerly, that the *Tories* have forsaken their old Principles and Maxims of Government. We have already shewn, that even a *Jacobite* both will and must, upon his own Principles, oppose a Government

established upon the Principles of the *Revolution*. We have also shewn, that this hath been done both long, and often. And, I think, it is pretty evident, that it cannot be done with Safety at the present, or with a good Grace at any Time, but under the Disguise of *Whig* Principles, and strong Professions of *publick Spirit*. In a Case of so much Importance as a *total Conversion* from Principles so entirely repugnant to those formerly held by them, it will be incumbent on them to produce much more substantial and convincing Proofs of their Sincerity. Those hitherto given are very suspicious; and they become much more so, when we observe at the *Head* of the present *Opposition* to the *Court*, a Person, who was formerly one of the *Heads* of a *Tory Ministry*, and afterwards officiated in the same Character to a *Papish Pretender*; and who, in both Stations, run the *whole Lengths* of his *Party*, with all that *Rapidity* and *Precipitation*, which hath been the distinguishing Characteristic of the *Party*, whenever it had Power. He hath since commenced *Patriot*; but I never heard him suspected of any Action in Favour of *Whiggism*, except *one*, the Merit of which, if there was any in it, he hath entirely cancell'd by a publick and formal Denial of the Fact. A Circumstance not very favourable to a *Party* professing *Whig* Principles, and yet continuing under the Direction of a Person ashamed, and perhaps with Reason, of the only Service he ever was surmized to have done the *Whig* Interest.

On the other Hand, as their *Opposition* to the Government is no Proof, that the *Tories* have renounced their former Principles; so neither is it an Argument that the present *Whig*,  
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*Court*, or *Ministerial Party*, call them by what Name you please, are become *Traytors* to the *Whig* Cause, because they continue the Friends and Supporters of the present Government. The same Reasons that shew the Falsity of the one, strongly infer the Absurdity of the other. A *Whig* would cease to be a *Whig*, if he did not support, strenuously support a Government, which he observes the *Tories* are everlastingly opposing. Neither will a *Whig* think himself concerned to oppose any Government, while its Administrations are agreeable to the Constitution and the Laws of the Land. *Resistance* to a legal Government, I believe, was never asserted or maintain'd by any *Whig*; and consequently, *Opposition*, such a violent *Opposition*, as now prevails against the present Government, administred in every Respect according to Law, cannot be justified on any Pretence.

You ought therefore, Mr. *D'Anvers*, to have proved what you have only insinuated, that the *Administration* is *corrupted* to a Degree subversive of the Constitution; and then it would naturally have followed, that the Friends of such an *Administration* have turn'd *Traytors* to the Principles of *Whiggism*. But this is what you have not attempted to do, any otherwise than by a general Declamation against *Bribery* and *Corruption*, and a short Hint about *Standing Armies in Times of Peace*. The former of these, however justly to be condemned, and severely to be punished in whatever Person it is fairly and fully proved against, yet is entirely foreign to the Question in Debate. For though he must be an ill Man, who is guilty  
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of *Bribery* and *Corruption* ; yet *Bribery* and *Corruption* prove a Man neither a *Whig* nor a *Tory*. As bad an Opinion as I have of the Principles of the *Tories*, yet I never once imagined, that they would own *Bribery*, and *Corruption*, to be of the Number ; though I am sensible, I shall not be thanked by some warm *Whigs* for so favourable a Concession. These Gentlemen will be apt to remind me of King CHARLES the Second's *Pensioner Parliament* ; of the famous *Treaty of Commerce* ; and of some other *beneficial Jobs* consequent upon it ; wherein it did not appear, that the Paws of some *Tories* were then so strongly fortified against *Bribes*, whatever were their Principles.

The other Point of a *Standing Army in Time of Peace*, would, I own, be to the Purpose, could it be proved, that the modern *Whigs* are become as much the Friends to governing by such *Standing Armies* as the *Tories* have formerly been. But there is a wide Difference to be made betwixt a *Force* annually appointed by *Parliament*, and paid by *Parliament*, and a constant *Standing Army* raised, and maintained without Consent of *Parliament*, and employed to govern the Nation instead of a *Parliament*. That the *Nature* of Actions varies, as their *Circumstances* vary, is a Maxim in *Morals* ; and much more will it hold in *Politicks*. We all know, that the *Tories* have not only pleaded for *illegal Standing Armies*, but have actually made use of them to set up and support an *Arbitrary Power* in the *Crown*. We all know likewise, that there is still in being a *Popish Pretender* to the *Crown*, who never can come  
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in upon other Principles, than those of *Arbitrary Power*, and who by *Arbitrary Power* must be supported, whenever he does come in. His Adherents are known to be still numerous, and still restless. The Wisdom of the Nation hath therefore, *from Time to Time*, thought fit to appoint such a *reasonable Force*, as might preserve the Nation from so dangerous an *Enemy* without, and so pernicious a *Distemper* within. All this is not only consistent with *Whig* Principles, but absolutely necessary for the Support of the *Whig* Cause; that is to say, the Cause of *Liberty* and *Property*. And they, who complain of this, complain of it with an equal ill Grace, as a *Murderer* would exclaim against the Laws of his Country as *cruel* and *sanguinary*, for punishing a Man with *Death*. The *Material Action* is the same in both Cases, the *depriving* a Man of his Life; but the *Motives* and the *Circumstances* constitute the *Difference*, and render the *one Action criminal*, and the *other* not only *just* but *meritorious*.

Thus, Sir, I have considered so much of your Argument as relates to the *Dissenters* joining with the *Tories* on the Foot of *Political Affairs*; and, I apprehend, have made it evident, that they never can come into such an *Union*, until they either *desert* their own *Principles*, or the *Tories* give better Proofs than have yet been given, that they have *forsaken* theirs. It remains to enquire what Encouragement the *Dissenters* have to hope for fairer Quarter from the *Tories* now than formerly, with regard to their *Religious Principles*; and whether they have Reason to doubt, as you endeavour to insinuate,

sinuate, that the present *Whig*, or *Court Party* are grown *cool* in their *Friendship* to them, and now, that they are *in Power*, despise an *Interest* which they courted, and *depended upon*, when they were *out* of it.

If, according to a Maxim quoted by you in this very Paper, and which is as universally familiar, as it is universally true, *Men are to be known by their Works*, the *Dissenters* want not the most sensible *Marks*, whereby to distinguish their *Friends* from their *Foes*, nor need be at any Loss whether to seek for them among the *Whigs*, or the *Tories*. The *Works* of the one *Party* have been a constant *Opposition* to the *Works* of the other; and what those *Works* were, and how much they tended to the *Honour* of *Religion*, the *Welfare* of the *Kingdom*, and the *Happiness* of *Men*, is notorious to the whole World. Those *Works*, and the *Consequences* of those *Works* have been the Subject of the *Annals* of *England* for upwards of an Hundred Years; a Subject with which they have been both blotted and defiled.

Whoever is acquainted with the History of Parties in this Kingdom cannot be ignorant, that the first Division of the Nation into those two great Parties of *Whig*, and *Tory*, was, in a great Measure, occasioned by a Difference of Sentiments with Regard to those who had the Misfortune to *dissent* from the *Church* as by Law established. The very Names of Distinction made Use of on that Occasion, and kept up amongst us ever since, were derived from Words that had a plain Allusion to *Presbytery* on the one Hand, and to *Popery* on the other; and consequently were employed as

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Characteristicks to denote how the Persons bearing them stood affected to those other Parties, from whence they were supposed to fetch their Original. Other Causes of Division were not, indeed, wanting ; but certain it is, that this was not only pretended, but actually subsisted as a principal Foundation of the Animosities and Contentions, that arose in the Kingdom, during the latter Part of the Reign of King CHARLES the *Second*. The *Papists* had joined with the *Tories* in assisting that *Prince*, and his *Ministers*, to advance the *Prerogative*, till it became dangerous to the Constitution ; and the *Dissenters*, on the other Hand, found themselves oblig'd, both by Principle, and Interest, to throw their Weight into the Scale of that Party, who were zealous Asserters of the Liberties of the People, and struggling to confine the *Prerogative* of the *Crown* within the Limits of the *Law*. This Circumstance, doubtless, did not a little contribute to conciliate the Minds of the *Tories* to the *Papists*, and of the *Whigs* to the *Dissenters*. For I readily agree both with Mr. *D'Anvers* and *Tully*, that *idem sentire de Republica*, to think alike concerning *Political Matters*, is not only a very common, but a very justifiable Foundation of Friendship, both publick and private. But the Friendship betwixt the *Whigs* and the *Dissenters* had a yet deeper Root, and owed its Original to widely different Causes. To do this Matter Justice, it would be necessary to trace the Growth of our Divisions as high up as our first Reformation from *Popery*. But to do so, it would be unavoidable to mention some things that, at this Time of Day, might, perhaps, be

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equally displeasing to all Parties : For which Reason, I shall carry this Detail no farther back than the *Restoration*.

At that joyful, and, perhaps, a little too much neglected Period, for the Liberties of the People, the Affairs of that Party, whose Successors are now denominated *Dissenters*, were in a pretty odd and perplexed kind of Situation. The *Presbyterians*, for so they were then generally called, had been highly instrumental in that important Transaction, which had at once restored the King to his Crown, and the Kingdom to its Constitution. They had therefore on that Account some Claim to Merit. But as soon as the Restoration was happily brought about, it was judged necessary by the Gentlemen, who then had the greatest Influence in the publick Councils, to restore the Church of *England* to her former Dignities and Prerogatives, as a Reward for the Services and Sufferings of her Members in the late Times of Anarchy and Confusion. One Half, I believe, I might truly and confidently say, the larger Half of the *Presbyterians* themselves, at least of the Men, who then wore that Denomination, came into this Measure. But they came into it upon Principles of Peace, and Principles of Moderation. They neither imagined, that the *High-Church Party* would have carried Matters to such a Pitch as they afterwards did, nor that their former *Brethren* would have proved so unobsequious and refractory in the Point of *Conformity* : But when they found themselves mistaken in both these Particulars, they then very honestly and christianly endeavoured to make Matters as easy as possible on all Hands. This  
however

however proved exceedingly difficult for them to do, in the Case of an *open Separation* from the *Church*, and amidst such an Ebullition of Zeal, which still continued in Mens Minds, after so great and unnatural a Ferment as had lately been in the Nation. The Torrent bore too strong against them ; and a *High-Church Party* in the *Court*, secretly abetted and supported by a *Popish Interest*, which lay at that Time concealed in it, rendered all their Endeavours vain and abortive. They saw every Day, with Regret, *Penal Laws* enacted against their *Separating Brethren*, and oftentimes executed upon them with a Degree of *Severity* little short of the most *extreme Rigours* of *Popery*. They saw this done, I say, with Regret, but durst not, for many Years, oppose it, at least directly and formally oppose it, for fear of kindling a new Flame in a Nation grown drunk with mistaken Notions of *Loyalty*, and mad with *Bigottry* to a Sett of Principles, which neither were the Principles of the *Church of England*, nor of any other *Protestant Church* in the World.

The Danger of *Popery* began, at length, to open the Eyes of the People, and to raise an Alarm in the Nation ; and then these Men, whom I have been mentioning, ventured to declare, and to rouse themselves in favour of those Sentiments of *Liberty*, both *Civil* and *Religious*, which they had always inwardly cherished, but sometimes thought it not prudent openly to exert. From this Time forwards the *rigid High-Church-Men*, and They, have continued at perpetual Variance ; the *one Party* constantly advising and promoting *Penal Laws* and *Prose-*



cutions against the *Dissenters*, and the other no less constantly recommending *Toleration* and *Forbearance*. Now it was, that the *two Parties* began to be distinguished, and to distinguish themselves by the Names *Whig* and *Tory*. So that the *Dissenters* have no sure Rule, whereby to judge of any Man's Affection to them as *Dissenters*, but his Adherence to those Principles annexed to the *Terms* of a *Distinction* entirely occasioned by a Difference of Sentiments in relation to the *Dissenters*.

Now what are, and always have been the distinguishing and avowed Principles of a *Tory* as to this Matter, and as to *Religious Liberty* in general. Besides a great many absurd Positions in relation to *Church Power* and *Authority*, which it is needless to mention in this Place, because they are now pretty well exploded by all the World except themselves, and their ancient *Friends* and *Allies*, the *Papists*, do not the *Tories*, to this Day, professedly believe, and maintain the following Propositions, which entirely put it out of their Power to have either *Friendship*, or even *Mercy* for the present *Dissenters*, or any Sort of *Dissenters* whatsoever? The *Damnable* Nature of an unintelligible Thing called *Schism*, but applicable to every thing which *Tory Priests*, and their *Bigotted Disciples* happen to dislike. The Power of *saving*, or *damning* Souls, at the Pleasure of fallible, and oftentimes wicked Men. The Invalidity of all *Orders* not conferred according to the *Canons* of the *Church of Rome*, and the consequent Invalidity of all *Ministrations* performed in pursuance of such Orders. A Doctrine, which unchurches most of the *Protestant Churches*

*Churches* abroad, an excellent *Protestant Church* established in the *Northern Part* of our own *Island*, and even the *Church of England* herself, as she now stands established since the late *Happy Revolution* ; and leaves Millions of Souls to the *Uncovenanted Mercies* of *God*. A Power to make Laws about Matters *perfectly Indifferent*, and to enforce them with the most grievous and severe *Penalties* ; that is to say, a Power to make Laws for no *Reason*, and to punish Men for no *Fault*. The Necessity of restraining free *Inquiries* into *Religious Matters*, and free *Reasoning* about them ; and the Lawfulness of *discouraging*, *oppressing*, and *ruining* Men, who cannot, in every Tittle, conform to the Established *Worship*, *Discipline*, and *Government* of the *Church*. These, *Sir*, and many other *Doctrines* equally unreasonable, and equally abhorrent to *Human Nature*, and to *pure Religion* and *undefiled*, have all along been preached up by the Gentlemen of the *High-Church*, or *Tory Party*, as their peculiar and favourite Tenets. Nor have you, or any one else, ever had the Boldness to assert, that the *Party*, or any considerable Numbers of the *Party* have either recanted, or deserted them. And as the Majority of the Gentlemen now in *Opposition* to the Court is made up of Persons, who have long worn, and gloried in the *Stamp* of these Principles, I leave even you to judge what Favour or Friendship the *Dissenters* can ever have any Reason to expect from them.

There is still the less Reason for the *Dissenters* to depend upon such a *Party* of Men, when the whole Course and Tenor of their  
 Actions

Actions is compared with these their known Principles. Were not the *Penal Laws* all enacted by *Tory* Parliaments, and always executed with the greatest Rigour under *Tory* Administrations? Did they ever mitigate, when in Power, the Severity of those Laws, but in order to make the *Papists* enjoy the larger Share of the Favour? And whatever they did of this kind, was it not done in an *illegal* and *arbitrary* Manner, to render the *Dissenters* odious to the Nation, and to draw them into a *Snare*; though the better and wiser Part of the *Dissenters* were happily preserved from falling into it? Did not this plainly appear upon the *Revolution*, when those very Men, who had promoted King *James's* *Illegal Indulgence*, comprehending both the *Papists*, and the *Dissenters*, afterwards defeated the charitable Design of a *Comprehension* of the *Protestant Dissenters*, and opposed the granting them a *legal Toleration* all that they could? Did not these *Friends to Liberty* and to their *Country* disturb the Nation, and perplex the Affairs of all *Europe*, for Years together, and in the Height of a dangerous, though glorious War, entred into for the Defence of the *Common Liberty* of many Nations; only that they might carry a Bill to prevent *Occasional Conformity*, which was intended as a *Prelude* to further Encroachments on the *Toleration*? Was not that *unchristian* and *inhuman* Law, which deprived the *Dissenters* of the natural Right Men have to educate their own *Children*, forged by the same *Cabal*? And hath not the *Repeal* of those Laws been constantly and vigorously *opposed* by most of those Gentlemen, who are now cajolling the *Dissenters*,  
under



under the Notion of *opposing* the Court upon *Whig* Principles? Have not the *Highb* and the *Non-juring* Clergy, who have carried the *Doctrines* of *Persecution* to the utmost Heighth, and have constantly expressed the greatest Rancour and Violence against the *Dissenters*, been always their Creatures and Dependents? And do not this Sort of Men continue to this Day Friends and Well-Wishers to the Gentlemen in the *Opposition*, and the most hearty Promoters of their Interest, whenever they have an Opportunity of serving it? Have any of the *moderate Bishops* or *Clergy* ever received the smallest Token of Favour or Friendship from any *Tory*, either *Antient* or *Modern*? So far from it, that Men of their Character have, in all Times been hated, and insulted by the whole *Tory Party*, as much, if not more, than the *Dissenters* themselves. Of this Truth we have an illustrious Instance in the Person of a *Venerable Prelate* yet living. Hath he not been the perpetual Mark of their Scorn and Rage, for thirty Years past, meerly on Account of his *Catholick Spirit* and *charitable Principles*; and for distinguishing himself, upon all Occasions, as a good *Christian*, and a good *Englishman*, in Opposition to *Slaves* and *Bigots*? How have they ridiculed, and libelled him for his Doctrine of *Sincerity*, because it happens to favour the *Dissenters*, though without it neither the Cause of the *Reformation*, nor the Cause of *Religion* itself can be justified? In a Word, have either the *Principles* or *Practices* of this *Party*, ever since it came to be distinguished as a *Party*, been any thing else, but a Source of *Enmity* to, and one continued Series of *Hostilities* against

gainst, I do not say the *Dissenters* only, but the *Liberties* of their *Country*, the *natural Rights* of *Men*, and the *Principles* of *Human Society*?

Whatever hath been advanced concerning the *Tories*, just the contrary is true concerning the *Whigs*. Their *Principles* in *Religious Matters* have all along been so favourable to the *Dissenters*, that the *Tories* on that Score have been perpetually running them down among the *Common People* as *Enemies* and *Traitors* to the *Church*. They were the first *Men* in these *Kingdoms* that seemed to have a consistent and rational *Notion* of *Religious Liberty*, equal, just, and impartial *Liberty*. The extravagant *Claims* of the *High-Flying* and *Non-juring Priests*, they never admitted as a *Part* of *Religion*, and consequently by such *Men* have often been said to have none. All the great *Men* of the *Church*, that have ever been reckoned among the *Adherents* of the *Party*, were *Persons* exemplary for *charitable* and *moderate Principles*. Many of them have appeared in the *highest Dignities* of the *Church*, and have adorned it both by their *Lives* and *Doctrine*; always professing, and even preaching up such a *Degree* of *Tenderness* to *Dissenters*, as made their *Adversaries* often cry out against them as *Dissenters* in *Principle*, themselves; and constantly behaving in such a *Christian Manner* as demonstrated, that they were, at least, neither *Bigots* to their own *Principles*, nor *Enemies* to the *Persons* of such as had the *Misfortune* to dissent from them.

Agreeable to these generous *Maxims* and *Principles* hath been the whole *Conduct* of that whole *Body* of *Men*, whom you, *Sir*, are  
pleased

pleased to term the *Court* or *Ministerial Party*, but whom the *Dissenters* always do remember, and are resolved never to forget under the old and friendly Denomination of *Whigs*. All the Opposition that ever was made to the *Penal Laws*, so far as they regarded the *Protestant Dissenters*, came from the *Whig Party*, and by the *Whig Party* was, at length, after many Struggles, rendered effectual in the *Act of Toleration*. This *Act*, as it hath been a continual Grievance to the *Tories* ever since it took Place, the *Whigs* have been no less industrious to support and maintain, as one of the most precious and valuable Parts of the Constitution. Every Attack made upon it hath constantly excited their Jealousy, and approved their Vigilance. They impeached of High Crimes and Misdemeanours a bold *Incendiary*, who had the Insolence to preach against it, and to renew those Breaches in the Nation, which the Wisdom and Moderation of the Government, at that Time, had so happily repaired. All the Gentlemen employed in that virtuous and memorable Transaction, were known and professed *Whigs*. Six out of Eighteen of them are still living, and, to the Honour of the *present Administration*, all of them are placed in Stations of the greatest Power and Dignity in it. The *First Occasional Bill* was three times successively thrown out by their Interest and Prevalence in the House of Peers. Nor did they come into the *Second*, till the *Dissenters* themselves had acquiesced in it, as an Expedient to fix some wavering *High-Church-Men* in the Interest of the *Protestant Succession*, at that Time in the utmost Danger from a *Tory Administration*. The famous *Schism*



*Act*, contrived by a Set of *Apostates* from the *Dissenters*, and copied from an eminent *Apostate* of Antiquity, met likewise with the same Opposition; and was carried only by the Power of superior Numbers against superior Reasoning, and superior Eloquence. But tho' both of these proved at that Time unsuccessful, yet, as soon as a convenient Opportunity offered, the same Men, who had formerly opposed those Laws, calculated for the monopolizing of Power, and the Depression of Liberty, concurred with great Readiness and Chearfulness in the Repeal of them.

From this short View of the Principles and Actions of the *Whigs*, and *Tories*, during the whole Term of their Existence, down to the present Times, the *Dissenters* have more than sufficient Light to distinguish betwixt their *Friends*, and their *Enemies*. All that hath been laid in the Balance against this, is only a few faint and ambiguous Expressions, which you, Mr. D'Anvers, have been pleased, in the Paper now under Consideration, to throw out in Favour of your Friends the *Tories*. They acknowledge, you say, their Error. Experience hath removed Prejudice. If the *Dissenters* will join with the *Tories*, against the Ministry, their Country will owe them all the Acknowledgements due from good and grateful Citizens of the same Commonwealth. Poor and mean Satisfaction this! for all the Hardships and Cruelties the *Dissenters* have suffer'd from this wicked and tyrannical Party. Errors they acknowledge; but they tell us not what Errors, amongst a whole System of Errors, every one of them subversive of all Liberty both Civil and Religious. Prejudice

is removed, but we neither are told in how great a Degree, nor whether in such a Degree as may be sufficient to remove any remaining Grievances the *Dissenters* at present complain of. Instead of this, it is coldly promised, that their *Country* will owe them a *Debt* of *Acknowledgement*, on Condition, that they join with a *Party* of Men, who have long been the known *Enemies* of their *Country*; and the only *Security* for this *Debt*, is the bare *Word* of those who have, in a thousand Instances, demonstrated, that they looked upon the *Dissenters* as a Sett of Men, with whom *no Faith* was to be kept. Who can be certain, that the *Doctrine* of *Authoritative Absolution*, which so long hath been a darling Tenet with the *Non-juring Clergy*, and their *Tory* Followers, might not, upon so convenient an Occasion, be made use of to free their *Country* from the *Crime* of breaking a *Promise* so very loosely and artificially worded?

Weak as these Hints and Insinuations in Favour of your Friends the *Tories*, are, those you employ to alienate the *Dissenters* from the Men, whom they have hitherto looked upon as their Friends, are still weaker. They lean, you say, upon the *Dissenters*, when out of Power, and esteem them a Burthen upon them when in it. Can you give any one Instance of this, Sir, except that the *Test Act* is not yet repealed? And pray, to whom is it chiefly owing, that this Repeal could never yet be obtained? Is it not probable, more than probable, that the true Reason why the Friends of Liberty have never yet attempted it, hath been a just Apprehension, least the *Tories*, and their *Trumpeters* of *Sedition*, should raise a general Clamour against it;

revive the old Cry of the *Danger of the Church*; and open a new Scene of Confusion in the Nation? I speak this only upon Conjecture; but surely the Conjecture is neither an unjust nor an unreasonable one. And it is rendered the more probable on this Account, that the *Dissenters* have actually received more *real* and *substantial* *Proofs* of *Christian Moderation*, and *Good-will* to themselves, during the *present Administration*, than they ever did receive from any of the *Tory Party*, or can possibly receive from them, unless God should miraculously remove that *Evil Spirit* of *Bigottry*, which hath so long *possessed* the whole *Party*. But allowing the very worst of your Supposition, that the *present Ministry* are, at the Bottom, not such cordial Friends to the *Dissenters*, as the *Dissenters* could wish them, yet very small will be the Advantage the *Tories* can reap from such a Concession. The only natural and reasonable Conclusion the *Dissenters* could draw from it, would amount to no more than what is a very common and obvious Reflection upon human Nature.

— *Vitiis nemo sine nascitur; optimus ill' est, Qui minimis urgetur.* —

I shall now conclude this Letter, which is already spun out to too great a Length, with a very fair and modest Proposal both to you, Sir, and to the *Party*, whose *Representative* you take upon your self to be; and which, if you mean honestly on this Occasion, neither you, nor they can, with any Colour of Decency, refuse.

Give



Give us then, Sir, a clear and formal Renunciation of all *Anti-Revolution* and *slavish* Principles ; and some positive Assurances of your real Attachment to the *Protestant Succession* in the *present Royal Family*. Make it plain to the World, that your *Opposition* to the *Ministry* is not the Result of *Disaffection* to the *Government*. Let this appear by better Proofs, than continually thwarting the just and necessary Measures taken by the Nation in *Parliament*, for the publick Safety, and to keep out the *Pretender*. Endeavour not to lessen the Danger of the *Pretender*, till you have lessened his Interest, by abandoning it ; nor to weaken the Security of the *Government*, till you have shewn, that you have weakened its *Enemies*, by revolting from them. Discard all your *Jacobite* Leaders ; and if you contend for the *Constitution*, do it not under the Banners of Men, who have been known *Traytors* to the *Constitution*. Shew, that you distinguish betwixt an *arbitrary Power* in the *Crown*, and an *absolute Power* in the *Legislature* to do all things necessary for the Preservation of the *Constitution*. In short, distress not the *present Government* with a View to bring in *another Government*, contrary to *Law*, and *subversive* of all our *Laws* ; nor complain of the over-grown *Power* of the *Crown*, till you have demonstrated, that you wish no *other Person* to wear it, whom you would invest with *greater and larger Powers*. Do this, and then you may rail at *Bribery* and *Corruption*, and *bad Ministers*, as long as you please. The *Dissenters* may then possibly unite with you, and thank you. But this you may be assured of, that you will enjoy the united Praises  
and

and Blessings of all *honest Men*, and sincere *Lovers of their Country*.

Give us likewise a full and authentick Renunciation of all your former *high-flown* Notions in *Religious Matters*. Explode, in particular, that *Idol of your Party*, the *Power of enjoyning in-different Matters* under great and grievous *Penalties*, a Principle, which flows from nothing else but the mere *Love of Authority*, and hath always been attended with *Wrath, Cruelty, and Persecution*. Let the extravagant Claims of the *Non-juring Clergy*, who have always herded amongst, and been supported by your *Party*, be openly *disclaimed*, as well as the *Erudition antiquated*, upon which they are founded; and prevail upon the Men of those Principles, who have so long been under your Influence, to *study Quiet*, and to *mind their own Business*. Let the *Doctrines of Division* be laid aside, and then the *Names of Division* will die away of themselves. Press *Uniformity* less, and *Unity* more. And if you are really inclined to come into peaceable Measures with the *Dissenters*, let your *Party* shew that Inclination, by candidly proposing, and heartily promoting, both in Parliament, and out of Parliament, such *calm and moderate Counsels*, as may effectually put an End to the *Spirit of Party*, and the *Spirit of Faction*, both in *Church and State*. This will be a much wiser, and a much honefter Method too, than a continued *Opposition*, not to the *Administration* only, but to the *Constitution* itself. This will at once *vindicate* your own *Sincerity*, and render the *Ministerial Party* *inexcusable*, should they refuse to join with you in so good a Work, as the *bealing of our Divisions*, at the evil Consequences  
of

of which you seem to be so deeply concerned. It will do more than all this: It will UNITE THE WHOLE BODY OF THE PEOPLE INTO ONE PARTY, and let Posterity see, that there hath been a *Word of Truth* for once in a *Craftsman*, though only in the Nature of *Prophecy*.

These may seem to some pretty hard and imperious Conditions. But considering what Lengths your *Party* have run, I can hardly believe, the *Dissenters* will be satisfied with less. People that have gone too far, must be at the Fatigue of making a Retreat proportionable to their Advances. The *Dissenters* have been deceived already by some of your *Party*, and consequently require a double Security for their future Behaviour. If you are authorized to give any Assurances of such a Security, I dare engage, that it will have its due Weight among the *Dissenters*, and shall not fail to be acknowledged in the most particular Manner by,

S I R,

*Yours, &c.*





of which you seem to be so deeply concerned  
it will do more than all that I will venture  
the whole body of the people into  
one party, and the majority, that there  
has been a great deal of error in a  
man, though only in the same way  
There may seem to some that this is  
injurious conditions, but considering what  
lengths you have gone to, I can hardly  
believe, that you will be satisfied with it.  
People that have gone to such lengths  
in the name of religion, and have been  
to their deaths, I think, have been  
deceived, either by some of your party, or  
consequently require a double security for their  
future behaviour. If you are not disposed to  
give any Assurance, then I cannot, I can  
say, that it will be a great loss to the  
cause, and I will not fail to be satisfied  
that it is the most prudent measure to be

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